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Picture Story No. 55
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WHAT FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE LOOKS LIKE

Pictures Show Outward Symptoms -- But Accurate Diagnosis
Calls for Veterinary Skill and Experience

Prompt discovery of foot-and-mouth disease is the basis of its quick eradication, says the Bureau of Animal Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Like a fire, this livestock plague is easiest to stamp out if detected early and control measures are undertaken immediately. So that livestock owners and others may know what this foreign infection looks like and be able to report suspicious cases to veterinary authorities, the Bureau has authorized the publication of a series of pictures of affected animals. Some of the pictures were taken during outbreaks of the disease in the United States. Others were made in central Mexico, where a campaign of control and eradication is now in progress.

The outward symptoms vary somewhat in different animals, in different outbreaks, and even in different localities during the same outbreak. But the conditions shown in the pictures are fairly typical.

The more common foot symptoms are: Blisters between the toes, lameness in one or more feet, sloughing of the hoof, and pain sufficient to cause affected animals to lie down much of the time. Affected hogs sometimes walk on their knees.

Common mouth symptoms are: Blisters on the lips and tongue, ropy saliva, smacking of the mouth, and evidence of pain when eating.

Other symptoms are rapid loss of flesh, reduced milk flow, inflamed udders, blisters on teats, and loss of appetite.

Animals showing such suspicious symptoms, especially if several are similarly affected, should be confined, and the case reported at once to the nearest State or Federal veterinarian. Serious spread of disease is likely to follow the moving or concealment of such animals.

An accurate diagnosis requires veterinary skill and experience, as some less harmful diseases have a few of the same symptoms as foot-and-mouth disease. The two diseases most likely to be confused with it are vesicular stomatitis and vesicular exanthema. Often it is necessary for expert diagnosticians to distinguish between the three by inoculation tests in which different kinds of animals are used. The virus of foot-and-mouth disease affects cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, and guinea pigs, but not horses. That of vesicular stomatitis affects all those animals, including horses. The virus of vesicular exanthema affects hogs, sometimes horses, but not cattle or guinea pigs. However, only persons with technical knowledge and skill should assume the responsibility of a final diagnosis.

Department veterinary officials emphasize that no known case of foot-and-mouth disease has existed in the United States since the last small outbreak in California in 1929. Publication of pictures of the outward symptoms of the disease, therefore, is purely precautionary as a help to stockmen and others in recognizing the disease more readily if an outbreak should occur in this country.

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Picture Story No. 55 - What Foot-and-Mouth Disease Looks Like

(EDITORS AND WRITERS: You may obtain 5x7 glossy prints of any of the pictures here shown free on request to Press Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.)

Common foot symptoms of foot-and-mouth disease include--

- (1) Eroded tissue between the toes,
- (2) Sore feet that cause affected animals to lie down most of the time,
- (3) Sore feet that cause hogs to walk on their knees.

Common mouth symptoms include--

- (4) Blisters on the tongue, which break, making it painful for the animal to eat,
- (5) Ropy saliva dropping from mouth, in cattle,
- (6) Smacking of lips and accumulations of saliva, in cattle.

Other symptoms include--

- (7) Blisters and erosions on cows' teats, with rapid drop in milk production.

